SITREP.04.03

A SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR APRIL WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-JUNE, 2003

SUMMARY

1. Summary: This report provides an update on the situation of emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in April in Africa, the Middle-East, Central and Southwest Asia, and Latin America. Key ETOPs, including locusts, grasshoppers, armyworm and grain-eating red-billed Quelea birds are covered by the report. A brief overview of the current status of each of these pests is outlined in the remainder of this summary with detailed accounts and a six-week forecast provided thereafter.

DESERT LOCUST, SCHISTOCERCA GREGARIA (FORSKAL)

2. Desert locusts, Schistocerca gregaria (Forskal). As a result of unfavorable environmental conditions that persisted during the reporting month, the locust situation remained fairly calm in most of the invasion areas in western and northwestern Africa. A few scattered solitary adults were seen in Morocco and Niger. Significant developments are not likely during the forecast period.

3. No locusts were reported in the Greater Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula in April. The good rains that fell on the Red Sea coasts of Saudi Arabia, the interior of Oman and the seasonal rains that have begun falling in eastern Ethiopia and Somalia could improve breeding conditions during the forecast period. However, significant locust activities are not expected.

4. With the exception of a few isolated adults that were seen in the western coasts and adjacent areas in Pakistan, no locusts were reported from the Eastern Outbreak Region. Unfavorable breeding conditions persisted in April most of the spring breeding areas in this region and significant locust activities are not expected during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUSTS AND GRASSHOPPERS.

5. Red locusts, Nomadacris septem fasciata (Surville): The red locust infestations that were reported earlier in Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas, Tanzania subsided. Grass burning that is expected to commence in June will likely force the locusts to congregate in a few patches of green vegetation in the Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas where small swarms may be formed. The situation in the other outbreak areas remained relatively calm in April and will likely remain so during the forecast period. The situation that was reported earlier in Madagascar has cooled off. Only low density populations were sited in the mid-western and north-western parts of the country. It is likely that locust numbers will remain low with limited activities seen in a few places during the forecast period. Nevertheless, routine survey and monitoring are recommended to avoid any surprises.

6. Madagascar migratory locust, Locusta migratoria capito (L.). No report was received on the migratory locust in Madagascar in April. With ecological conditions remaining relatively dry, it is likely

that locust activities will remain calm during the forecast period.

7. Some Zonocerus variegatus (L) activities were reported in Nioro region, Senegal. No reports were received on the African Migratory Locust, Locusta migratoria migratorioides (R.), tree locust, Anacridium melanorhodon (Walker), the Senegalese grasshopper, Oedaleus senegalensis (Krauss) or brown locust, Locustana pardalina (Walker). It is likely that the locust situation will remain calm during the forecast period unless ecological conditions improve.

8. Moroccan locust, Dociostaurus maroccanus (Thunberg) and Italian locust, Calliptamus italicus (L). Widespread hatchings of the Italian locust occurred in Samangana, Kunduz, and Balkh, Afghanistan in late March and early April. Hoppers were observed in most of the outbreak regions below 800 meters (2400 feet) altitude. Hatching might have also started in the higher grounds in Nahri, Butka and Jurga districts of Baghlan province. Deltamethrin, Nurelle D and diflubenzuron (an insect growth disruptor) were used to control the pest. Unmarked mines in most of the infested areas in Khanabad, Kunduz province make it difficult to implement survey and control efforts. Locust activities were reported in Pyanch, Tajikistan in early April. The UN/FAO approved a Technical Cooperation Program to the GoT to support training as well as chemical and mechanical control. There is a likelihood of increased locust activities, which could threaten crops in these areas during the forecast period. Active survey, monitoring, and early interventions using the most appropriate and safe methods will be essential to avert any significant crop loss.

9. Armyworm, Spodoptera exempta (Walker). A late report indicated that armyworm infestations were seen 30 ha of maize crops on February 19 in Nandi District, Kenya. The birds were controlled by farmers with the help of the District MoA. Armyworm activities were not reported in April from the other IRLCO-CSA or DLCO-EA member countries. With the onset of the spring rains in Kenya and northern Tanzania, there is a likelyhood of armyworm invasions during the forecast period.

10. Red-billed quelea, Quelea quelea (L.). In April, Quelea birds were seen and controlled in cereal crops in Dododma, Mbeya, Manyara, and Singida Regions of Tanzania. Control operations were carried out by the MoA with DLCO-EA's spray aircraft. A total of 46 roosts were treated on over 1,100 ha with some 2,400 liters of avicides. Small-scale infestations were also reported on irrigated rice fields in Tana River District, Kenya. Quelea infestations were not reported from the other DLCO-EA or IRLCO-CSA member countries. It is likely that these birds could continue causing a problem to cereal crops in the traditional outbreak areas in Tanzania, Kenya, and other countries during the forecast period. Survey and monitoring are essential to avert any damage. End of Summary.

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

11. A few light showers fell in mid-April south of Agadez. Patches of green vegetation were seen in a few places in Air, Niger and northern Mali. Other countries in the western and northwestern desert locust outbreak areas remained fairly dry in April with no significant precipitation recorded.

12. Medium to heavy rains were recorded between 15-22 April in the summer breeding areas on the Red Sea coasts of Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the interior of Yemen, UAE, and the interior of Oman. Seasonal rains continued to fall in eastern Ethiopia from Dire Dawa to Jijiga, and northern Somalia where conditions are expected to improve during the forecast period. Good rains were recorded in Djibouti 14-25 April as a result of which breeding condition began to improve. Light showers were also reported in a few places in Eritrea. Conditions may start improving in areas of recent rainfall.

13. The spring breeding areas in Baluchistan and Pasni in the Eastern Region received light rain in April and patches of green vegetation were seen in a few places in the outbreak areas in the north and the coastal areas. The rest of the outbreak areas remained fairly dry and unfavorable.

14. Most of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region received light to moderate rain in March. Some areas in this region, including western Botswana, Namibia, eastern and western South Africa, southern Mozambique, Lesotho and extreme northern Tanzania received normal to above normal rain (up to 150 mm) in mid to late April. Other countries in the region received below normal or no rain during the second dekad (10 days) of April.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITIES

15. Western and Northwestern Africa Outbreak Region: Isolated immature and mature adults were seen in north-central Niger. A few isolated adults were also sited in northeastern Morocco. The locust situation remained fairly calm in most of the western and northwestern outbreak areas. No locusts were reported from Libya, Chad, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Guinea Conakry in April.

16. Forecast: Locust numbers will continue to decline during the forecast period. Only a few isolated adults may be seen in areas of green vegetation in Niger, Mali, Mauritania, and Algeria. The situation will remain relatively calm in the other countries during the forecast period

17. Eastern Africa, Northeastern Africa, and the Near East Outbreak Region: Locusts were not seen during the surveys that were carried out in a number of countries in the Central Region outbreak areas in April.

18. Forecast: As vegetation continues to dry up in the Red Seas coastal plains and the hinterland in Sudan, the locust numbers will continue to decline. A few isolated adults may be seen in a few places along the Red Sea coastal plains in Sudan, Somalia and Saudi Arabia.

19. Eastern Outbreak Region: No locusts were seen during the joint cross-border surveys that were carried out in April by Iran and Pakistan. Desert locusts were not reported from Afghanistan or India in April.

20. Forecast: It is possible that a few adults may be present and persist, however, significant activities are not expected during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUST AND GRASSHOPPER ACTIVITIES

21. Moroccan locust, Dociostaurus maroccanus (Thunberg) and Italian locust, Calliptamus italicus (L.). Widespread hatchings of the Italian locust occurred in

the northern and northeastern parts of Afghanistan, including Samangana, Kunduz, and Balkh areas in late March and early April. Hoppers were observed in most of the regions below 800 meters (2400 feet) altitude. Hatching might have also begun in higher altitude areas in Nahri, Butka and Jurga districts of Baghlan province. Most of the hatching occurred in the river valleys. Control operations were implemented using vehicle mounted as well as backpack sprayers using deltamethrin, Nurelle D (a cocktail pesticide) and diflubenzuron (an insect growth disruptor). Active and voluntary community participations in the control operations were witnessed in most of the outbreak areas. Most of the infested areas in Khanabad, Kunduz province contain unmarked mines which make survey and control efforts difficult to implement. Locust activities were also reported in Pyanch, Tajikistan in early April. The UN/FAO approved a Technical Cooperation Program in February 2003 to provide training as well as support chemical and mechanical control operations.

22. Forecast: It is likely that numbers of locusts will increase during the forecast period and begin threatening crops, if early intervention is not implemented in the outbreak areas. Increased activities may be seen in some of the areas in these regions. Vigilant survey, monitoring, and early intervention using the most appropriate and safe tools will be essential to avert any major crop loss that could occur as a result of invasions by this pest.

23. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). No reports were received on locusts or grasshoppers in LAC countries in April.

24. Forecast. No significant developments are expected during the forecast period.

25. Red locust, N. septem fasciata (Surville). Locust populations that were reported earlier in Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas, Tanzania subsides mainly due to the unfavorable dry conditions that prevailed in most parts of the country. The locust situation in the other outbreak areas also remained relatively calm in April. No locusts were reported in April in Buzi-Gorongosa, Mozambique, Lake Chilwa Plains, Malawi, Mweru wa Ntipa, Zambia, and Lake Rukwa and Malagarasi, Tanzania. Grass burning that is expected to commence in June will likely force the locusts to congregate in a few patches of green vegetation in the Iku-Katavi and Wembere outbreak areas where small swarms may be formed during the forecast period and or after. Other areas will likely remain relatively calm. The red locust situation in Madagascar that was reported earlier has cooled off. Only low density populations were seen in the mid-western and north-western parts of the country.

26. Forecast: Overall, locust activities will probably be reduced in most of the outbreak areas during the forecast period due to the onset of the dry season. Significant locust activities are not expected during the forecast period. However, some increase in number of locusts may be seen in a few pockets of green vegetation. Vigilant surveillance and monitoring are required.

27. Madagascar migratory locust, L. migratoria capito (L.). No reports were received on the Madagascar migratory locust in April. With breeding conditions remaining relatively dry, it is unlikely that locust activities will remain minimized. However, survey and monitoring are recommended during the forecast period.

28. Brown locust, L. pardalina (Walker): Brown locust activities continued to be calm in the traditional outbreak regions in the Karoo regions in Namibia South Africa. Unless, rain falls in these areas, the situation will not change during the forecast period.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITIES

29. Armyworm, S. exempta (Walker). A late report indicated that armyworm infestations were observed on February 19 on 30 ha of maize plants in Nandi District, Kenya. The pests were controlled by farmers with the help of the District MoA. No armyworm activities were reported from other IRLCO-CSA or DLCO-EA member countries. No armyworm activities were reported for April.

30. Forecast: With the onset of the spring rains in Kenya and northern Tanzania, there is a likelihood of increased armyworm activities during the forecast period. The pest may also be seen in Ethiopia, Uganda and other great lakes countries.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITIES

31. Red-billed quelea, Q. quelea (L). In April, two DLCO-EA aircraft sprayed a total of 29 roosts in Dodoma, six roosts in Mbeya and 13 roosts in Singida and Manyara regions, Tanzania on over 1,500 ha with some 3,000 liters of avicides. Crops saved were millet, sorghum, and rice. Small-scattered populations of Quelea birds were reported in Tana River District, where currently 600 acres are under irrigated rice in Garsen area. Monitoring is underway and number of birds is expected to increase with the crop reaching maturity. Quelea infestations were not reported from the other DLCO-EA or IRLCO-CSA member countries.

32. Forecast: Quelea breeding and infestations are likely to continue in Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe and could threaten irrigated crops. Active survey and monitoring are essential to avert any such damage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. During the reporting month, only a few of the ETOP outbreaks, mainly quelea birds, warranted substantial control efforts, however, had these been left unaddressed, they could have increased to levels that pose serious threats to crops and pasture. It is evident that a minimum shift in the balance of subsistence production system, can significantly affect the already precarious food security in most of the ETOP outbreak areas. Therefore, it is important that regular monitoring, surveillance and reporting are maintained and results communicated promptly to the appropriate bodies within the national, regional and international structures.

Note: The end of the current drought and/or dry spell in Southern Africa and other outbreak regions would likely trigger serious ETOP developments in most of these areas and could lead to massive infestations and subsequent crop damage. Therefore, regular survey, monitoring, and reporting are highly recommended to avert any such invasions.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

34. The Africa Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA) project, previously managed by the USAID's Bureau for Africa (AFR), has been transferred to the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and

Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) and is being managed by the Office for US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). AELGA continuous to work closely with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Migratory Pest Unit and other entities, USAID bilateral and regional missions, DLCO-EA, IRLOC-CSA, host country ministries, and research establishments, and Southern Africa Development Community Drought Monitoring Center (SADC/DMC). Information on ETOPs is regularly collected from these and other entities, including the Information Core for Southern Africa Migratory Pests (ICOSAMP) to continuously monitor and analyze the potential risks for large-scale emergency outbreaks, and compile and disseminate as [AELGA] SITREPS to all interested parties. Unsolicited reports or information about ETOP situations and activities in your region or country are always warmly welcome and much appreciated.

35. Missions with programs and portfolios on food security, agriculture, environment and related activities are solicited to encourage their host country counterparts to send us regular updates on ETOP activities as often as possible. FEWS field personnel are also solicited to send us any information they may secure on ETOP activities in their countries and/or regions of responsibility. Regional organizations with ETOPS mandate and host country partners are kindly requested to forward their reports by the last day of the reporting month or within the first three days of the forecasting months. Please, forward reports, information, questions, and/or requests to Dr. Yene T. Belayneh: ybelayneh@ofda.net FAX: 202-347-0315 (USA). A copy to Drs. Joe Vorgetts, jvorgetts@usaid.gov and Harry Battenberg, hbattenberg@afr-sd.org is appreciated.

For more information on the weather conditions, you may visit the following web sites:

http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/esahel/sehtoc.htm

http://www.fews.net

For more information on ETOP activities, you may visit:

http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhom.htm/

http://www.english/newsroom/news/2002/5000-en.htm/
http://www.webagrac.uk/directory/NRI/pcs/

http://www-webgreac.uk/directory/NRI/quel/

http://icosamp.ecoport.org/

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AELGA'S ACTIVITIES, VISIT US AT OUR WEB SITE: WWW.AELGA.NET

UPCOMING EVENT

Interregional Trainer Training Course on Alternative Application Strategies and Tactics (AAST) for acridid control, in 2003. Those interested can contact Dr. Yeneneh T. Belayneh, via e-mail: ybelayneh@ofda.net sd.org or phone: 202-661-9374 and fax: 202-347-0315 (USA)

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